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TO THE MEMORY OF

REV. JOHN TODD EDGAR, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

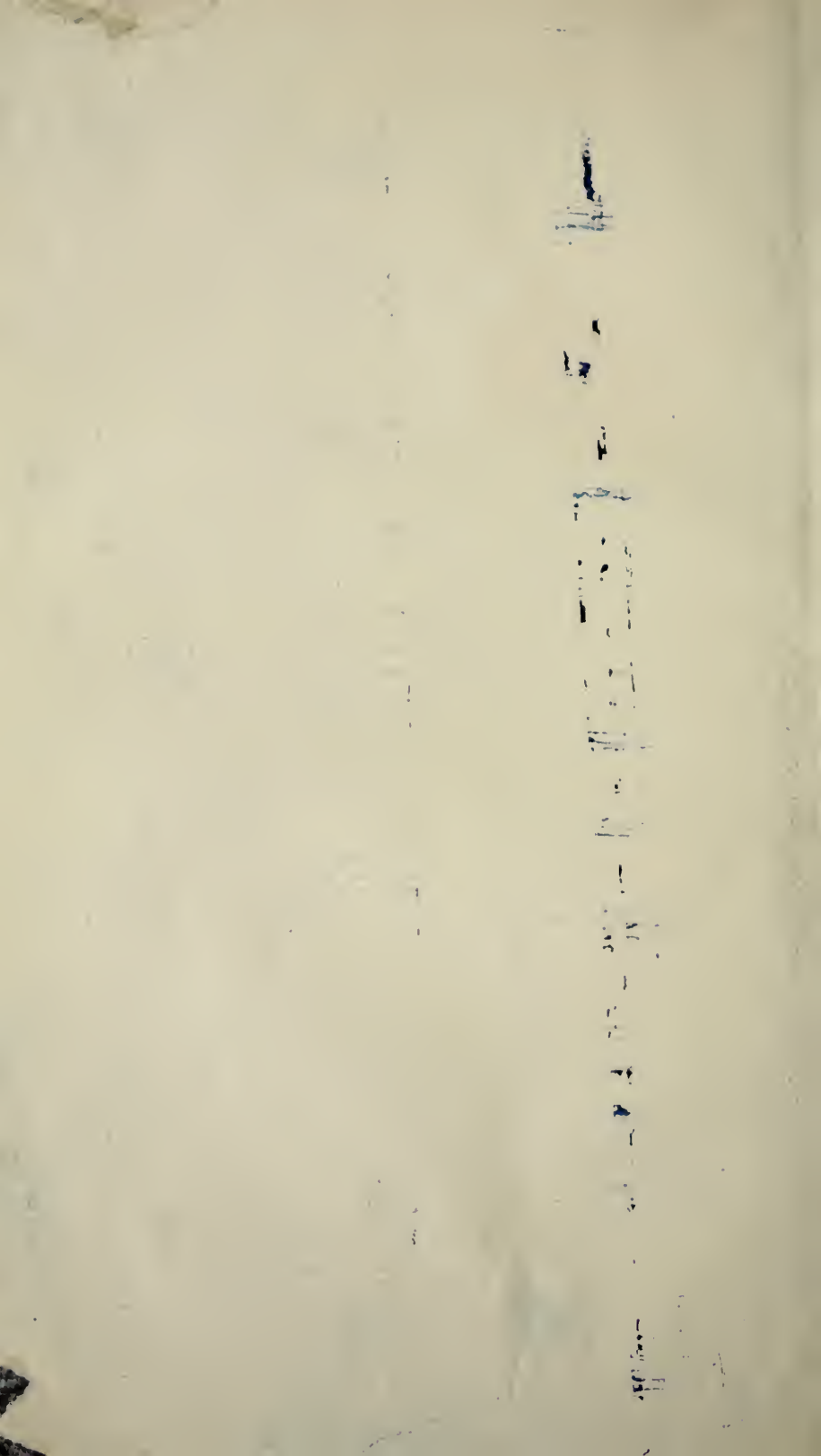
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE.

COMPILED BY THE CHURCH.

NASHVILLE, TENN.

JOHN D. F. FALL, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER,
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1881.



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PREFACE.

It is with reluctance that the author has felt constrained, through the solicitations of many of the friends and admirers of the late John T. Edgar, D. D., to consent to the publication of the following discourse. But, while he does not feel at liberty to disregard the wishes of others in this matter, he feels it is due to the memory of the deceased to state, that the discourse was very hastily prepared,—as it was desired, and confidently expected till the evening immediately preceding the funeral services, that one of the Professors of the Theological Seminary at Danville, Ky., would be present to officiate,—thus leaving one night only for the work of preparation. With this explanation, the discourse is furnished for publication just as delivered, with only an occasional change in phrasology, and the addition of a few foot notes.

OBITUARY.

The Rev. JOHN TODD EDGAR, D. D., died of Apoplexy, Tuesday, November 13th, 1860, at 8 o'clock, A. M., aged 68 years and 7 months.

The Sabbath morning preceding his death he preached in the Presbyterian Church in Edgefield, and baptized the child of the Rev. J. T. Hendrick, pastor of said church. Sabbath night he preached in the First Presbyterian Church of Nashville, of which he was the beloved pastor from 1833 until his death, a period of twenty-seven years.

Monday, he was quite unwell all day; but attended and conducted the usual weekly prayer-meeting, at night, as was his custom. At the close of the prayer-meeting he moderated a meeting of the Session of the church, at which his remarkable cheerfulness was the subject of observation. He retired to rest that night at the usual hour; but about 1 o'clock, suddenly sprang up in bed, throwing both hands to his head with an exclamation of great physical suffering. It was the fatal stroke of Apoplexy! He soon sunk into a state of unconsciousness, and continued in this state till 8 o'clock, when he quietly and peacefully *fell asleep in Jesus*. God often extorts, in a dying hour, said George Whitfield, that testimony to His grace which was not fully given in life; but he who has lived faithfully can afford to die silent. Such was the case with our departed friend and brother. God saw there was no necessity for a *dying* testimony.

J. B.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE MEETING OF THE

PASTORS AND CLERGY OF NASHVILLE AND VICINITY,

IN REFERENCE TO THE DEATH OF THE

REV. JOHN T. EDGAR, D. D.

Pursuant to a call through the city papers, the pastors and clergy of the various denominations of Nashville and vicinity met in the Lecture Room of the First Presbyterian Church, at 10 o'clock, A. M., Wednesday, November 14th, 1860.

Rev. R. B. C. Howell, D. D., pastor of the First Baptist Church, was called to the Chair, and Rev. W. M. Reed, pastor of the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, was appointed Secretary.

After a few appropriate and touching remarks by the Chairman, Dr. Howell, explanatory of the object of the meeting, all joined in prayer, conducted by Rev. Thos. O. Summers, D. D., of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

On motion of the Secretary, the Chairman appointed a committee of five to prepare a preamble and resolutions expressive of the sense of the meeting, in view of the solemn and sad occasion by which they were convened.

The Chairman announced the following gentlemen to compose said committee:

Rev. L. D. Huston, D. D., of the Methodist Episcopal Church; Rev. Mr. Smith, of the Protestant Episcopal Church; Rev. Mr.

Ford, of the Baptist Church; Rev. W. E. Ward, of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and Rev. J. S. Hays, of the Presbyterian Church.

The committee having retired, the meeting was feelingly addressed by Rev. Dr. Lindsley, who spoke of the noble and exalted traits of character of the deceased—among which he singled out that of charity, as pre-eminently exhibited in his life and labors in all the varied relations in which the speaker had known him, of pastor and counsellor, co-presbyter and Christian.

Rev. Dr. Elliott said, if he were called upon to delineate the predominant feature in Dr. Edgar's character, he should speak of him as a *comforter*, inimitable in the sick-room, warm and generous in his sympathies, ever ready with sweet words of consolation for the bereaved and sorrowing; a friend and counsellor for whom he had cherished the profoundest gratitude, and whose loss he mourned, both as a personal and public calamity.

Rev. Dr. Goodlett spoke of his eminent social qualities and pulpit excellences as worthy of imitation, and deeply mourned his loss.

Rev. Mr. Campbell said he had known him intimately from his arrival in Nashville, and dwelt with emphasis upon the catholicity of his Christian spirit.

Rev. Mr. Fall spoke very tenderly of the deep piety and eminent Christian life of his departed friend, whom he had known for many long years.

Rev. Mr. Bardwell said, associated as he had been for some time with Dr. Edgar, as co-pastor, he had enjoyed opportunities perhaps, with which no one else had ever been favored, of witnessing his inner life, and never had he known a man of

truer purposes of right, or nobler aims in religion; generous, firm; naturally a man of strong feeling, positive in all the elements of his character—he manifested in a striking manner the powers and influence of the grace of God upon his heart. As Paul to Timothy, so had the lamented dead ever been to him.

The committee returned and presented the following preamble and series of resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, The painful intelligence has come to our ears of the sudden death of Rev. JOHN TODD EDGAR, D. D., senior pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in this city, which event occurred at his residence Tuesday morning, at 8 o'clock, November 13th, 1860, therefore,

Resolved, That the pastors and clergy of the city of Nashville and vicinity, his fellow-laborers in the ministry, and, we believe, the entire community, receive this intelligence with the most profound sensation of sorrow.

Resolved, That we recognize in our departed brother the oldest minister in the city; one whose age and long service in the ministry had identified his name with the moral and religious progress of this city and of the State; one whose influence extended over more than one generation; whose life was one protracted devotion to his fellow-men; whose eye was single to the success of the Redeemer; whose soul was generous, fraternal, and sympathetic; whose rarely-gifted mind was cultivated to an unusual degree; whose bearing and voice amid his fellow-men commanded the cheerful respect of all; whose heart was ever open to the widow's cry and the orphan's wail, and who was at once an ornament to the pulpit, to the social circle, and to his race.

Resolved, That we take this occasion to record our devout gratitude to Him who ruleth in the Church and among men, for raising up and preserving to us for so long a time, one so thoroughly fitted by nature, grace, and cultivation for the great work of the gospel ministry.

Resolved, That while we humbly submit to this dispensation of Divine Providence, we cannot suppress our deep regret at the loss which the Church and the community have sustained,

Resolved, That in his life of patient and fervid devotion to the cause of his Master, there is left for the ministry an important lesson, which it becomes them carefully to study, and diligently to improve.

Resolved, That we, the ministry of Nashville, cannot express our sense of the painful chasm which the death of this venerable pastor has made in the heart of his Church, still less the desolation that must reign in the bosom of his family, to both of which, and to his bereaved colleague, we hereby tender our profound sympathies.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to the family of the deceased, and be published in the city papers and in the Presbyterian Herald.

On motion of Rev. Dr. Summers, the pastors and clergy of the city and vicinity of Nashville were requested to meet in the Lecture Room of the First Presbyterian Church, Thursday, the 15th inst., at 10 o'clock, A. M., to attend the funeral of the Rev. John T. Edgar, D. D., deceased.

On motion, the meeting adjourned with singing and benediction.

R. B. C. HOWELL, *Chm'n.*

W. M. REED, *Sec'y.*

FUNERAL OBSEQUIES.

Pursuant to a resolution adopted at the meeting of the pastors and clergy of the city and vicinity held the day previous, a large number of ministers assembled at the First Presbyterian Church, Thursday, 10 o'clock, A. M. At 11 o'clock they proceeded in procession to the house of the deceased, whence the body was borne to the church by the officers of the first, second, and Edgefield Presbyterian churches, the clergy proceeding in front of it. The capacious church was immediately filled to its utmost capacity by the numerous friends and admirers of the deceased.

The services were introduced by Invocation, by Rev. Mr. Strahan, of Ky.; after which followed the reading of the 142d

hymn* by Rev. Dr. Howell; reading of the Scriptures by Rev. J. T. Hendrick; prayer by Rev. J. S. Hays; reading of the 353d hymn† by Rev. Mr. Fall; sermon by Rev. Joseph Bardwell; prayer by Rev. J. B. Lindsley, D. D.; reading of the 633d hymn by Rev. Ira Morey; and the Benediction by Rev. Dr. Eagleton, of Murfreesboro.

The congregation then attended the body to its resting place in the city cemetery. At the grave the 639th hymn was read by the Rev. Dr. Huston, of the M. E. Church, and sung by the choir. The Rev. W. M. Reed of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, made a brief, appropriate address, and Rev. Dr. Eagleton concluded with prayer. The mournful procession then wended its way back to the city, feeling that they had consigned to the city of the dead the mortal remains of one esteemed, admired and beloved by all.

* This hymn was used by the deceased at the close of the services, Sabbath night, and read with peculiar tenderness and emphasis.

† This hymn was a special favorite with Dr. Edgar, and the last hymn that he ever read and united in singing at the prayer-meeting the night before his death.

FUNERAL DISCOURSE,
PREACHED AT THE OBSEQUIES
OF
REV. JOHN T. EDGAR, D. D.,

BY
REV. JOSEPH BARDWELL,

NOVEMBER 15TH, 1860.

FUNERAL DISCOURSE.

WHEN our Lord was going to his crucifixion surrounded by his malignant enemies, there followed "a great company of people, and of women," bewailing him with tears and lamentations. Their hearts were bursting with inconsolable grief at the prospect of seeing him whom they loved, nailed to the accursed tree, and expiring in shame and agony. So intently were their minds fixed upon the gloom incident to his cruel death, that they desiered not the after-glory. Little did they think of "the triumphs which were to succeed this humiliation, and the inconceivable blessings which were to result from the agonies of the Cross." But in the midst of their grief and despondency, our blessed Lord turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, *weep not for me, but weep for yourselves.*"

And, on this mournful occasion, when we are assembled around the mortal remains of one whom we all love, and whom Jesus loves—while our hearts are bleeding, and the fountains of our grief are all unlocked, a voice seems to issue from that sacred coffin, saying, *weep not for me, but weep for yourselves.*

Though he has fallen in the midst of domestic endearments, of social happiness, and of pastoral usefulness; though all the sacred ties of kindred and affection are suddenly sundered, the bonds of friendship loosened, the labors of a beloved and faithful Pastor ended, and the lights of earthly hope extin-

guished forever; yet *weep not for him*. By faith we behold his ransomed spirit before the throne of God, enraptured with a heavenly vision of his glorified Redeemer; we may, then, well cease our tears and say, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

Weep not for the sainted dead; for though the King of terrors has selected for his victim one who sustained the endearing relations of husband, father, brother, friend, pastor—though he has smitten the aged head of a family, the beloved and venerated pastor of a church, and the faithful and disinterested friend, and spread desolation through a scene so late replete with similing joy,—still, "triumphant faith" exclaims, *weep not!*

This mournful dispensation of Providence, 'tis true, viewed simply as a temporal event, presents an accumulation of distress and calamity, of utter ruin and hopelessness, that would seem to shut out every ray of consolation; but, when viewed in the light of the Gospel, and in connection with the glorious consequences which follow, all the darkness of the scene is lost in the effulgence of a "hope full of immortality." Though startled by the sudden summons, death found him, "staff in hand and pilgrim shod," ready to enter the unseen world.

"A soul prepar'd needs no delays,
The summons comes, the saint obeys;
Swift was his flight, and short the road,
He clos'd his eyes, and saw his God."

But, Brethren, nature must feel, and the fountains of grief must be opened. We are here to-day in the sanctuary of God, feeling that His hand is upon us. *Truly a standard bearer in the hosts of Israel, has fallen!* An event so sudden, so solemn, so impressive, and so wide-spread in its influence, occurs not often in a course of ages. This whole city with its business

marts closed, its courts of justice with their deliberations suspended,* this large and sympathizing assemblage of ministers, this vast congregation so solemn and so deeply moved, these weeping relatives and friends, and this sanctuary all draped in mourning, show that an event of no ordinary importance has occurred in our midst. Nor need I repeat what has already been uttered by a thousand tongues—"DR. EDGAR IS DEAD!" Brethren and friends, would that I could this day take my seat with you as a silent mourner around this consecrated spot; would that I could give vent in sighs and tears to the feelings of a heart burdened with grief and responsibility; and would that I could listen to words of comfort and consolation—words replete with hope and encouragement, falling from the lips of wisdom and experience.† But God has ordered it otherwise. May His grace sustain and direct me in the discharge of the solemn and responsible duty now devolving upon me.

Should I, on this mournful occasion, attempt to address to you a formal discourse, I would perhaps select as my text such words as these, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." Ps. xxxvii. 27. I should seek to show you from the word of God that the foundation of all perfection in man, is the righteousness and grace of Christ; that he, and he alone, is the *perfect* man, who, by faith, has received and stands clad with the justifying righteousness of a crucified Redeemer; and that he, and he alone, is "*upright*," who has been renewed by the grace of God, and "erected from his fallen and ruined state in sin by the

*By proclamation of the Mayor there was a general suspension of business in the city, and the Chancery Court, then in session, Chancellor Frierson presiding, adjourned for the day.

†See Preface.

almighty power of the Holy Ghost." Such a character is formed upon principles infinitely superior to any thing, which can result from man's unrenewed nature. All his moral beauty, usefulness, and enjoyment, are the work of divine grace.

I should then consider *the end* of the *perfect* and *upright* man,—that it is *usually* tranquil and peaceful in life, calm and unshaken, and often joyful and triumphant, in death, and inconceivably blessed in eternity. And I might then, also, point you to the Divine injunction which makes it our imperative duty, as well as interest and privilege, to *mark* and *ponder* well the precious example which God thus gives for our edification and comfort, in the dying experience of his dear children. Such an example we have vividly before us at this time,—one who answers, in a most remarkable manner, the character of the *perfect* and *upright* man thus described.

But instead of attempting any formal arrangement of thoughts upon a text of scripture, I desire to obey the *spirit* of the injunction just quoted, by presenting, in a very desultory manner, such thoughts as almost *spontaneously* arise on an occasion like the present.

We are assembled to-day, in this house of mourning, around the mortal remains of one whom we all have known, and known to love and revere. It will not be amiss, then, that I briefly recall to mind some of the prominent facts connected with his life and death.

The Rev. John Todd Edgar, D. D., was born in Delaware, April 13, 1792. At a very early age he removed with his parents to Kentucky, in the bosom of which State he made his home till his removal to this city. Having completed his academic and collegiate course in the State of his adoption, he entered the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey, in 1813 or '14, and was licensed by the Presbytery of New Bruns-

wick in 1816. He then returned to Kentucky and accepted a call from the Presbyterian church at Flemingsburg, and was ordained and installed pastor of the same in 1817. A few years subsequent to this, he received and accepted, a call from the Presbyterian church at Maysville, Ky. His third pastoral charge was at Frankfort, Ky.; and his fourth and last, in this city. In obedience to a call from this church, he removed to Nashville, in August, 1833, and was installed pastor of the same soon afterwards, which relation he has sustained with eminent success and unabated satisfaction to the present time. During his ministry here he received into the communion of this church some eight or nine hundred persons, and baptized about one thousand children. Of those who constituted the original membership of this church at the time he became its pastor, only a few survive to mourn his death. Of the original eldership, which consisted of Nathaniel A. McNairy, James C. Robinson, and Robert H. McEwen, one only remains to represent the generation fast passing away. These few statistics will be sufficient to recall to the minds of most of you the labors of one with whom you have been so long and so intimately associated. Truly, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

I need scarcely remind you, my brethren, that I stand not here to-day to rehearse the praises of him whom we all mourn. I shall attempt to pronounce no eulogy upon the dead. He needs none. His monument is erected in the hearts of this community, irrespective of sect or party. And as to the affection and confidence of his immediate church and congregation, it is not too much to say, that it has been almost akin to idolatry. He was the pastor whom they loved most ardently, in whom they reposed the most unbounded confidence, and of whom they were justly proud. Such a man needs no eulogy from

mortal lips, much less from one so unworthy and so incompetent to the task.

But while I shall not attempt to speak in eulogistic strains of the virtues and excellencies which adorned the character of our beloved and venerated father and brother, still it is eminently becoming that I should briefly allude to some of those traits of character which marked him out as the *perfect* and *upright* man, whose example we should study and imitate. And in doing this, my object will be to unfold the treasures of Divine mercy, to recount the triumphs of infinite grace, and to present to your view a signal manifestation of the purity and excellency of that gospel which he so ardently loved, and on which he grounded all his hopes for time and for eternity.

First of all, he ever cherished a deep sense of personal guilt and ill-desert. Though abundant in labors, and rich in works of holy obedience, yet none more ready to renounce *his own righteousness*, and to exalt the mercy and grace of God. His only plea at the mercy seat was the mediation and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ; justification through faith in a crucified Redeemer, was the anchor of his soul. He was, therefore, the *perfect* man, being clad in the justifying righteousness of Jesus Christ, and heir, through him, to all the blessings of the covenant. Those whose privilege it has been to sit under his ministry can testify to the prominence which this great doctrine of grace held in all his pulpit ministrations. The cross was his constant theme; he never tired unfolding its excellency and power. Like the Apostle he could, and did often say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and, "I am determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

A second distinguishing trait of character—one which entitles him to the appellation, the *upright man*—was his depend-

ence upon, and his rich experience of the renewing and sanctifying grace of God. He loved to glorify the Holy Spirit in the work of salvation; and in all his labors for the spiritual welfare of others, he always recognized his absolute dependence upon Divine grace for any and every measure of success. Who of us can ever forget his fervid intercessions at the mercy seat for the effusion of the Holy Spirit—that God would accompany the preached word with the *demonstration and power* of the spirit of all grace? Without abating one jot or tittle of laborious christian effort, he ever looked to the Holy Spirit as the only and all-sufficient source of success: “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.”

Coupled with this deep and abiding sense of unworthiness and absolute dependence upon the righteousness and grace of Christ, was a most intense hatred, and awful dread of sin. In exact proportion to his sense of pardoning mercy, and his love to the Savior, were his terror and abhorrence of all iniquity. It was in view of that cross where Jesus agonized and expired under the dread penalty of human guilt, that he formed his estimate of sin. He studied sin in the light of the cross. There, stripped of its blandishments, unmasked in its deformity, and exposed in its seductions, it was revealed to him in its true character, as odious to God and ruinous to man. And this profound sense of the infinite malignity of sin, produced in him not only deep contrition and penitence, but a tenderness of conscience which shuddered at the least approach of evil, and an irrepresible desire for complete deliverance from all moral pollution,—a *hungering and thirsting after righteousness*. The grace of God enabled him to live at the foot of the cross, and in sight of His law. The word of God, Oh, how sweet to his taste! It was his study day and night. No one could approach him, without recognizing the traits of a prominently religious character. His

piety was a fresh running stream, supplied from the river of God; or rather, he stood "like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, which brought forth his fruit in his season"—yea, "bringing forth fruit in old age."

He was eminently a man of prayer, and a lover of the sanctuary. How often did he, with tears and affection, chide the people of God for the neglect of the ordinances of His house! He seemed never to weary of serving God in his sanctuary. Indeed, a large part of his life was spent in the delightful exercises of social worship. And in this capacity he had few equals. His ability in prayer was proverbial, and never failed to impress his fellow-worshippers with peculiar emotions of awe and solemnity. They felt as though they were listening to one who was talking face to face with God. His heart, submissive to God, was calm and steadfast, while others were troubled, and flowed

"Like the tide of the full and weary sea
To the depths of its own tranquility."

Another remarkable effect of his christian experience, was superiority to the world. This world, in his estimation, was as the dust of the balance. Few men possessed a keener relish for the endearments of kindred and affection, and the blessings of social life. The gifts of Providence were as heartily enjoyed by him as by any; but he received them as coming from his Heavenly Father, and used them as not abusing them. While he lived *in* the world, he endeavored to live *above* it—to keep it under his feet, remembering that *his citizenship was in heaven*. Elevated were his views above the things of time, and ardent his aspirations after perfect holiness and the full vision of his Divine Redeemer.

His affections being eminently sanctified, it was but natural that love and benevolence should reign pre-eminent. The former was *Catholic*; the latter almost unbounded. Closely

allied to these and springing from them, was the principle of *charity*, which was so beautifully developed and exemplified in the character of Dr. Edgar. It might be said with truth, that he was *charitable in all things*. But one form in which this principle was eminently exemplified, was his sympathy for, and liberality to the poor and suffering. The children of affliction and poverty ever found in him a sympathizing and beneficent friend. The members of this church and congregation can bear ample testimony to the depth of his sympathy, the fervor of his prayers, and the earnestness of his efforts in behalf of the suffering poor. As was remarked by one who had long known him intimately, "had he been possessor of hundreds of thousands, so great was his charity that he would have known experimentally the rare grace of poverty." But I need not dwell upon these virtues and excellencies of his character; they are known to this whole community. Of a truth may it be said of him, that he was a *living epistle, known and read of all men*.

Dr. Edgar was a man of a decided, positive character. There was nothing negative about him. While courteous and affable, he was always frank, open, and above-board in all he said and did. I need not say that he was a noble, high-toned christian gentleman, for this was a *proverbial* remark concerning him. There was an honest earnestness about him, and a noble frankness every way worthy of the christian gentleman and christian minister, that more than redeemed the errors into which his ardor may have at times betrayed him. To say that he was perfect in an absolute sense, would be to make him more than human. But who of us can approximate his standard? None more ready to acknowledge his imperfections than he; but, be they few or many, they were always exposed to view, for such

was the transparency of his character, that his heart and life were open to all.

As a bushand, father, brother and master, he was all that could be desired. More than this I dare not say, for I dare not intrude upon the sanctities of the domestic circle—I dare not enter the inner sanctuary of the heart. I therefore pass from these sacred scenes, where no “strangers’ feet may rudely tread,” to contemplate our venerated father and brother in his ministerial and pastoral capacity. Few men ever exhibited more of clear and sound intellect, of tender and melting pathos, and of bold and manly eloquence.

“With eloquence innate his tongue was armed.”

His vigorous and well-cultivated intellect, his varied and extensive attainments, his wonderful command of language, his fine, commanding person, his sparkling eye, and his rich, melodious voice, all combined to make him one of the most eloquent and effective preachers of the age.* None more useful and more universally beloved in their day and generation. May I not appropriately apply to him a part of the epitaph, engraven upon the tablet of the immortal Harvey?

“How did his genius shine,
Like heaven’s bright envoy clad in power divine!
When from his lips the grace or vengeance broke,
'Twas majesty in arms, 'twas melting mercy spoke.”

Of his pastoral relations to this church, it would perhaps, be presumption in me to speak. For twenty-seven years he has labored faithfully and patiently among you, and has reaped a

* It is related of the Hon. Henry Clay, that on a certain occasion, in the earlier part of his life, after making one of his most eloquent and effective speeches, he was congratulated by a friend. Turning to his friend, he said in substance, “You call me eloquent, but if you wish to hear eloquence, go to Frankfort and hear a young Presbyterian minister by the name of John Todd Edgar.

rich harvest in the ingathering of many precious souls into the garner of the Lord. During that long period, there has never been a communion season in this church without the addition of some to your number; and never but once has he been absent from you on such occasions, at which time it was my privilege to minister in his stead. He has been with you in prosperity and in adversity, in joy and in sorrow, in health and in sickness, in life and in death. In all these vicissitudes of life he has been a *comforter*; yes, pre-eminently a COMFORTER. Your own memories will readily recall his tender and soothing accents, his earnest and holy prayers, and his deep, heartfelt sympathy in the chambers of the afflicted, the sick and the dying. But what more need I say on these points? Silence and tears are more becoming and more eloquent than words.

May I not, however, on this occasion, bear my public testimony to that uniform kindness, courtesy and affection, which my dear departed father and brother has ever shown me in all our labors and intercourse during our intimate association in the pastoral work. In his own language, uttered in the hearing of some present, "Our relation has been like that of Paul and Timothy." And now that he has gone to join "Paul, the aged," in the services of the church triumphant, God grant that his mantle may fall upon many Timothys in the church militant.

And now, brethren, God is, by this sudden and desolating providence, preaching to us a sermon more impressive than mortal man can preach! This silent bier, this solemn sanctuary, and yonder greedy grave, all seem vocal with a message from the God of heaven, saying, "Be ye also ready." Your beloved pastor, now cold in the arms of death, stood before you last Sabbath night as an ambassador for Christ, beseeching you to become reconciled to God. His text—who can ever forget it? "*God speaketh once, yea twice; yet man per-*

ceiveth it not."—Job, xxxiii: 14. With what affection and earnestness did he urge impenitent sinners to listen to the voice of mercy! And having exhausted every plea, with what holy reverence and awe did he appeal to the great God, to know why He should yet speak longer to rebellious men! As if prophetic of his sudden departure, he asked in substance, "*Why should thy servant labor longer?*" The answer God has now given—so sudden, so unexpected, so awfully impressive! My dear impenitent friends, can you ever forget that last, that affectionate, that almost dying appeal of your aged and beloved pastor? Remember, it came from one who loved you, and who had your eternal interests near at heart; who has labored and prayed for your salvation; and one too, whose feet had well nigh "passed the threshold of the heavenly gate," and whose ear had almost "caught the symphonies of the upper world!" That noble form will never again enter this pulpit. No more will you gaze upon those features, so radiant with love and benevolence and holy zeal; no more will you listen to that voice, so rich in accents of mercy to attract, and so terrible in denunciation of wrath to warn—so full of tenderness and affection as it was lifted in your behalf at a throne of grace. The watchman upon Zion's wall has now sounded his last note of warning. God has said unto him, "It is enough; come up higher." Oh, let his solemn words of admonition and entreaty, which you have so often heard, and which now come to you in silent eloquence from that lifeless form, sink deep into your hearts! May the spirit of God engrave them indelibly upon the tablet of the soul. Remember how earnestly he prayed for your conversion, how faithfully he warned, and how affectionately he entreated you; yes, *entreated* you with tears and prayers to come to the blessed Redeemer and be saved. And can it be that those prayers and tears, those warnings and entreaties shall be forgot-

ten! Yes, it may be so; but how aggravated your guilt! how awful your condemnation!! Should such be your guilty doom, reflect,—for what wise purpose of God's providence you have so long enjoyed the faithful ministry of this eminent servant of Christ. Was it only that amid the fearful scenes of the judgment day, he should then stand as a swift witness against you, to testify that God did call, while you refused; and that His arm was stretched out, while you obstinately rejected the proffered salvation?

Christian brethren, the members of this bereaved church, this solemn event speaks with peculiar emphasis to you. For many long years God has provided you with a faithful shepherd to *lead you into green pastures, and beside the still waters*. You have enjoyed the ministrations of one eminently qualified by nature and by grace for breaking unto you the bread of life. This sanctuary has been to many of you your *spiritual* birth-place, and your beloved pastor, whose noble form now lies before you, your *spiritual* father. Like Paul to the Thessalonians, he can say of you, *What is my hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are my glory and joy*. Well may you exclaim with the prophet Elisha, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." You will miss him in the public and social ministrations of the sanctuary; you will miss him in the chamber of sickness and affliction, and you will miss him in all the holy and tender relations of pastor and people. But you will remember his godly counsels; you will cherish his affectionate entreaties, and you will follow his example, as he followed his and your Savior.

And now brethren, that your aged pastor is gone, you are called, in a most affecting and impressive manner, to a renewed

consecration of yourselves to the Master's service. With some of you the day is far spent, and with all, the time is short; *whatsoever, therefore, your hand finds to do, do it with your might. He being dead, yet speaketh.* Methinks the disembodied spirit still hovers around that lifeless form; it seems to stand once more in this sacred desk, uttering, with mute eloquence, words of affectionate warning and entreaty. Methinks I hear him saying to us, put on the whole armor of God; gird up the loins of your minds; fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life. The gates of the celestial city have just opened before him, and now he speaks to us, *in words not lawful for man to utter, of the ineffable glories of that heavenly world—of that inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.* Soon, very soon, you must all meet him in the world of spirits; and when you shall see him robed in white at the right hand of the Judge, God grant that you may be prepared to unite with him in the song of redemption: "To Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood."

What words of comfort and consolation, my dear friends, shall I address to you, the bereaved family? In this event God has come very near you, and has given you such a clear manifestation of the future world, as must involve no ordinary degree of responsibility. Never perhaps, till you are yourselves called to pass over Jordan and mingle with departed spirits, will you again enjoy such overpowering evidence of religious truth—such full discoveries of eternal things. But your hearts are too heavily burdened with grief, for me to dwell upon these thoughts now. In the midst of your deep desolation, however, it must be a subject of delightful recollection to you that you have enjoyed the privilege of being united, in the most endearing of all relations, with one so lovely in character, of an intellect so highly improved, of benevolence and piety so eminent,

and so entirely devoted to the best and noblest of all causes. You have been highly honored of God, and now doubly honored in having a husband, father, brother—seated upon a throne of glory.

But nature must weep its joys fled. The wounded heart must bleed; the fountain of grief must flow. But you will remember that Divine Friend who is nearer and better than husband, father, or brother. This mighty Redeemer will be the rock of your confidence, and your present help in all trouble. The God of Jacob bless you and comfort you, and grant you grace according to your day. I cannot say, *do not weep*; but do not weep for the sainted dead. This event, so desolating to your hearts, has sealed his eternal blessedness. He is now an heir of glory, rejoicing with the celestial throng, and bowing with devout gratitude and adoring admiration before the throne of God and the Lamb. True, he was called to pass through much tribulation—at times to drink deeply of the cup of earthly sorrow; but Jesus has wiped all tears from his eyes, and “the days of his mourning are ended.” He encountered many labors in the Master’s service; he fought a good fight, and nobly fell at his post, an old veteran soldier, covered with the scars of many a well fought battle, yet fully clad in armor and battling to the last. But his last battle is now fought. The victor’s crown is won. He is “a conqueror and more than conqueror through Him who loved him.”

“Dear pastor, husband, friend and head,
We loved thee living, and we mourn thee dead;
Why should we weep, for at His gracious word
Thou’rt absent from the flesh, but present with the Lord.”

Fathers and brethren in the ministry, may I venture to give utterance to the language of this dispensation as addressed to us? The death of a faithful minister of the gospel, in its bear-

ings, must be a solemn and far-reaching event. No other class of men so pervades the entire texture of society; none whose death affects so many hearts, makes so many mourners, or touches so many chords of affection, as that of a faithful and beloved pastor. See how every tie in this whole community is touched—every heart is weeping! The young and the aged, the rich and the poor, the living and the dying, all—all had found in him a friend, a brother, and a father; and more than all, a *man of God* with words of timely warning and entreaty, of peace and consolation. Now that he is gone, upon whom shall his mantle fall? Well may we exclaim, *our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?* “The Master has been in His garden, and has gathered some of the choicest of its fruit, and others are soon to be gathered.” The time is short; whatsoever our hand finds to do, let us do it with our might. *Behold the Judge standeth at the door!* Are we ready? “Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man as his work has been; even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly—Amen.”

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT.

The subjoined tribute to the memory of REV. JOHN TODD EDGAR, D.D., is taken from the Presbyterian Herald. The author will at once be recognized as the Rev. Robert J. Breckenridge, D. D., an old and intimate friend of the deceased.

THE sudden death of this eminent minister of the Gospel, at his residence in Nashville, Tennessee, of apoplexy, has already been almost universally noticed by the press. It is with no purpose of adding to that publicity that a few simple lines are now written by a hand, that, for forty-four years, habitually clasped his in love. Moreover, the most exacting reverence of his friends, could hardly have anticipated the numerous and unusual public testimonials which spontaneously and fervently commemorated his noble and useful life, and deplored his untimely death. Neither is it, therefore, to give new expression to grief or to admiration, by one who had grounds and knew reasons for both, far beyond what most men could have or know. But it is in order to throw together, in a brief and connected form, some of the main facts and dates, and incidents of his life, and to allude to some of the more distinguishing traits of his private and public character; so that something approaching a simple but just outline of him, may not be wanting.

He was born in the State of Delaware, it is believed in Sussex County, on the 13th of April, 1792, and died at Nashville, Tennessee, on the 13th of November, being well advanced in his sixty-ninth year. His parents were of that Scotch-Irish race, amongst whom the Presbyterian Church in America was first planted, partially occupying the two lower counties of the Eastern shore of Maryland, and the adjoining county of Delaware, in which Dr. Edgar was born. They removed to Kentucky in 1799, when he was seven years old his father being, like nearly all the early Presbyterian emigration to this State, by occupation a farmer. The family settled, and lived for many years, in the bounds of Cherry Spring congregation, in the present County of Scott, but finally removed into the bounds of Mt. Pleasant congregation, in the present County of Harrison. I have no certain information of the early education, or first religious impressions of Dr. Edgar; my acquaintance with him having commenced in 1816, upon his return from the Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey, where he studied theology, and of which Institution he was amongst the earliest students. He was licensed to preach the Gospel in New Jersey before his return, probably by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, in 1816. His first charge, over which he was ordained by the Ebenezer Presbytery in 1817, was the church in Flemingsburg, Kentucky; his second charge was the church at Maysville, Kentucky. He spent ten years in these two churches; how much of that period, exactly, in each, I do not know. In the year 1827 he removed to Frankfort, Kentucky, and became pastor of the church in that city, which he served during six years. In 1833 he became the pastor of the church in Nashville, Tennessee, at that time the only Presbyterian Church in that city, and served it twenty-seven years—to the close of his life. He served God, in the preaching of the

Gospel of His grace, forty-four years from his licensure, and then fell asleep in Jesus.

Though his labors were particularly devoted to the four special charges that have been mentioned, they were, nevertheless, widely bestowed throughout the churches of Kentucky and Tennessee; and during his long ministry, very many churches, and many thousands of persons, scattered over most of the other States, heard the glad tidings of salvation from his eloquent lips. All four of the pastoral charges of Dr. Edgar were important charges; each of these being also the only Presbyterian Church in its particular city when he took charge of it. More particularly at Frankfort, which was the capitol of Kentucky, and at Nashville, which became the capitol of Tennessee, was he brought into contact, habitually, with many of the most influential persons in both of those States. So that few ministers have enjoyed, for so long a period, such wide opportunities to bring the influence of the Gospel to bear effectually upon great communities, both by means of his public and private life.

It should be added that no inducement to leave the pastoral work ever shook for a moment his decided preference for it, and yet how great these inducements often were, in his own estimation even, may be judged, in some degree, by his great love of the Theological Seminary at Danville, which he had so considerable a share in founding, and whose directors he presided over from its origin till his own death; and yet his steady refusal even to consider the offer, again and again suggested, of the chair in it, most appropriate to his past labors and his increasing age. And his great services to that Institution, were but a sample of the constant course of his ministerial life; insomuch that every public institution for good doing within his reach, more especially every one connected

with the church of which he was a minister, found constant aid in his wise counsels and his warm support. Scrupulously punctual in all things, and exact in doing whatever he engaged to do, the courts of his church, during his whole ministry, were as really objects of his care and duty as his Sabbath day services. And in this service, the fruits of which are beyond estimation, he received, what so few in that church can ever receive, that highest mark of its approval, in being chosen, in 1842, the Moderator of its General Assembly. Respected by all who knew him, and no man was more widely known; admired by great numbers of those most competent to form a just judgment of him; tenderly loved by his friends, amongst whom were numbered persons in every condition of life, up to the very highest; trusted by all men, and approved of God, he was ready to be offered, and the time of his departure has come; he has fought a good fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith; and the Lord, the righteous judge, has given him the crown of righteousness which was laid up for him!

As a man, Dr. Edgar was endowed so richly, that in whatever condition his life had been cast, he would have adorned it, and have been widely felt in it. His appearance, to the last, was striking; and in his prime, he was a fine specimen of manly beauty. His address and manners were simple, cordial and refined; habitually respectful to every one, and most gentle to all who stood in need of his sympathy. His temperament was kind and genial, generous, loving, and most just; pervaded by a settled aversion to all that was mean, cruel, and base; sustained by personal and moral firmness of the highest order, and thoroughly unselfish. After the middle of life, a shade of melancholy—very common in such men after life has been fully tried—was manifest in him, to his near

friends. His intellectual endowments were more remarkable for their admirable balance, than for the special eminence of particular faculties. He did well, whatever he did; a wise man, sagacious in counsel, strong in the convictions by which his conclusions were reached; and firm and earnest in executing what he thought right. The path-way of such a man through life was necessarily a straight, clear way; his heart always in his hand, his object always palpable to all men. He was accounted, in his day, more remarkable, perhaps, for his oratorical gifts than for any others that would have made his public life so eminent. Besides his fine appearance and manner, besides his exquisite voice and intonation, besides the fervour and unction of his spirit, and the pathos with which these noble gifts were enriched—and these would make an orator—Dr. Edgar's eloquence rested, besides all this, on that honest, simple, deep and earnest grasp and presentation of all he uttered, which made it palpable to all who heard him. As a man, it may be truly said, a purer gentleman could not be; as a public man, a finer combination for great comfort, usefulness, and success in the walks he chose, has rarely been.

It was, however, chiefly as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as a minister of the Gospel of God, that this good man ought to be held in tender and grateful recollection. By birth, and training, and deep conviction, a Presbyterian; his whole religious life was marked, on one hand, by devotion to the strict sense of moral duty, the thoroughly evangelical faith, the simple and efficacious church order, and the untiring zeal in the Lord's work, characteristic of that branch of the church of God; and on the other, by their equally characteristic spirit of love and fellowship towards every other faithful branch of the kingdom of Messiah. Clear and constant in his own convictions; kind and trustful towards all good men of every

denomination, he was a noble specimen of the body to which he belonged. In that great struggle and deliverance which signalized his own denomination, about the middle of his ministry, few of the ministers of that day acted a more conspicuous part for God's truth; none a more decided one. Throughout his work, God was pleased greatly to bless the word as dispensed by him, alike in edifying the body of Christ, and in bringing sinners to repentance. As an example, it may be stated, that when he settled in Nashville there were sixty members in his church; the only Presbyterian Church there; when he died, there were four hundred and sixty members in his church, and there were two or three other Presbyterian Churches in that city; and during his service of twenty-seven years in his own church there, nearly one thousand persons were added to its communion, and it had become one of the most powerful congregations in our connection. In all that period no communion season occurred without additions to his church; nor was he ever absent from those multiplied communions but on one single occasion. Much, perhaps, of this constant success in winning souls, much undoubtedly of the great love of the people of his successive charges for him, and of the respect and reverence of every community in which he ever lived, was due to the remarkable gifts he possessed for the pastoral work, outside of the pulpit, and to the faithfulness and tenderness with which he gave himself to that work. A man in every respect worthy of the whole confidence of the troubled soul; competent, by divine grace, to guide those around him under the innumerable trials of life; ready for Christ's sake to bear a share of every burden under which the heavy laden are sinking; full of Christian sympathy, with sorrows which no mortal can assuage; such a man is a blessing, to any people, beyond all price, and his reward, even in this life, is the most

precious of all. It is such men who show us how much more blessed it is to give than to receive; how much sweeter and more ennobling it is to minister than to be ministered unto!

Such ministry was hardly compatible with very high, or very wide attainments, except in divine knowledge; while, on the other hand, it was obliged to produce a wide acquaintance with the general nature of all things, and to foster, by its habitual engrossments of the noblest faculties with the grandest ideas, all that is pure, and good, and great in man. It is not, I suppose, the fact that Dr. Edgar wrote much; nor is it probable that he has left behind him, in a permanent shape, much that can give a just conception of what he was. It is well known that it was not his habit to write out his sermons; how, indeed, could he have done it, and done, besides, one tenth part of what he accomplished; or how could he have read sermons from the pulpit, habitually, and been the preacher, the evangelist, the orator he was? And yet, probably scattered materials exist, which, carefully gathered and rightly used, would make a just sketch of his life, labors and times—a volume of exceeding great interest and value.

He was twice married. First, in 1816, to a daughter of Dr. Andrew Todd, of Paris, Kentucky—one of a family, both the parents and all the children of which (one of them was the late Rev. Andrew Todd,) were remarkable, from the earliest settlement of Kentucky to the present time, for their great piety and general excellence. All his surviving children, of whom there are two sons and two daughters, all settled in life, are the fruit of that marriage. His second wife, who survives him, the object of tender love to his bereaved congregation, and to a wide circle of friends in Kentucky, was the daughter of the late John Morris, Esq., near Frankfort, and the

widow of the late Robert Crittenden, Esq., a distinguished citizen of Arkansas, but a native of Kentucky.

A great man has fallen in Israel. Specially does it become the scattered; remnant of those old soldiers of the cross, who have so long fought the great battle, at his side, to close their ranks and stand more firmly in their lot. A little while, and the GREAT CAPTAIN will bid them all *come up higher!*

R. J. B.

ACTION OF THE CHURCH.

At the conclusion of Divine service in the First Presbyterian Church of Nashville, Sabbath morning, the 25th day of November, 1860, a meeting of the congregation was called, according to previous arrangement, and the following preamble and resolutions—submitted by Wm. S. Eakin, A. W. Putnam, and W. O'N. Perkins, committee—were unanimously adopted :

WHEREAS, In the dispensation of His all-wise providence, God has seen fit to remove from us, by death, on the morning of the 13th inst., our beloved senior Pastor, the Rev. JOHN TODD EDGAR, D. D., therefore,

Resolved, That in this sad dispensation of Providence, the officers and members of this church have sustained a great and irreparable loss.

Resolved, That in the death of our beloved Pastor, we sustain the loss of one who has long gone in and out before us, breaking unto us the bread of life, and who, as a faithful watchman on the walls of Zion, has, for more than a quarter of a century, proclaimed to us the unsearchable riches of Christ, unceasingly encouraging us, by precept and example, to accept of the invitation of mercy so freely offered in the gospel.

Resolved, That in the death of our late Pastor, we have a signal illustration of the bold, fearless, and consistent ambassador for Christ, of the warm sympathizing friend and comforter in the hour of affliction, and of one of whom, though now dead, it may be truly said, *his works do follow him*.

Resolved, That while in our bereavement as a church, we deeply mourn our great loss, yet, trusting in the wise appointments of Him who overrules all things for the good of his people, we humbly submit to His chastening rod.

Resolved, That in this sore bereavement, we tender to the afflicted family and colleague of our late Pastor, our warmest sympathies, praying that all needed grace may be theirs, and that this *affliction may work out for them that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*.

Resolved, That the above resolutions be published in the city papers and the Presbyterian Herald, and that a copy of them be sent to the family of the deceased.

On motion of Paul F. Eve, M. D., the resolutions as a whole, were unanimously adopted.

It was then moved and carried unanimously, that the salary accruing to Dr. EDGAR for the current ecclesiastical year, ending 1st September, 1861, be cordially tendered to Mrs. EDGAR, and also the use of the house in which the deceased has so long resided.

On motion, Messrs. Eve, Elliott, and Eakin were appointed a committee to receive contributions for the purpose of erecting a monument to the memory of Dr. EDGAR, and to supervise the same.

There being no other business before them, the meeting adjourned.

WM. S. EAKIN, *Sec'y.*

